



Greyhound Bus Depot
story on page 3

Newsline

Published Quarterly by the
Montana Department of Transportation Planning Division
www.mdt.state.mt.us

September 2002



Panoramic exterior view

Sweet Grass Open For Business

Rest Area

Travelers near the Montana-Canadian border on Interstate 15 will have an opportunity to see a new concept in rest area design at the recently reconstructed Sweet Grass rest area. Montana residents and visitors will see first hand that MDT is fulfilling its commitment to provide user-friendly, safe, convenient and innovative rest areas for the traveling public.

The Sweet Grass rest area is one of several new "prototypes" MDT will use for future rest areas throughout Montana. This prototype addresses issues identified in a 1998 survey of rest area users and analysis conducted during the development of MDT's *1999 Montana Rest Area Plan*.

Although the new rest area is in the same location as the old rest area, there are few similarities with the previous aging structure. The common entry lobby and interior restroom doors provide greater security because they are fully visible from the parking area through a large glass wall. Better lighting and security cameras in the lobby and parking area offer additional security. In a cooperative effort with Travel Montana, the lobby houses wall panels displaying essential traveler information, regional and statewide tourism and recreation opportunities. A touch-screen computer featuring local and state attractions and road and weather information will be installed to further

guide travelers.

In another departure from previous practice, all restrooms are single-use to accommodate restroom access during cleaning, and each well-lighted restroom includes porcelain fixtures, hot water, soap dispensers, and baby-changing tables and seats.

The innovative design concept, which has been dubbed the "great wall" by some, incorporates a curved retaining wall that unifies all elements of the rest area. The building is positioned behind the wall and the picnic shelters are niches within the wall. The retaining wall is colored, pre-cast concrete with sandstone inserts the same color and material as found in the area. Sloped landscaping behind the wall helps insulate the building while providing an attraction for visitors to climb and view the landscape. Walking paths circle the site for travelers in need of exercise.

An energy-efficient heating and cooling system and the earth fill design provides stable temperatures year-round. During the winter months, large south-facing windows will warm the building using solar heat-gain, while in the summer they will be shaded for cooling.

Swank Enterprises and Stelling Engineering of Great Falls, DT Architecture and SMD Engineering of Helena, and Millennium Engineering, Inc. of Billings helped make the new Sweet Grass Rest Area a success.



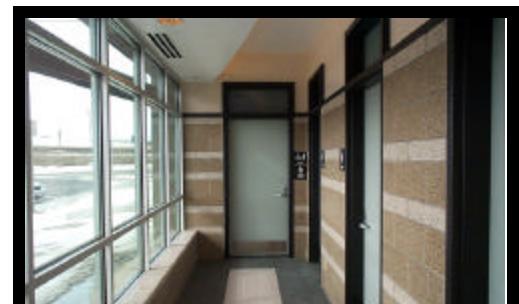
Ribbon Cutting - April



Lobby and Travel Information



Picnic shelter niche



Hallway to restrooms



New Number for Travelers

Travelers in search of road and weather information on Montana's roads have had to access this information from a variety of sources; MDT's 1-800 number for road reports; the National Weather Service for weather reports; and more recently, the Internet for information on both. Starting this winter, however, travelers will have a faster, simpler way to get road and weather information. That option is 511, the nation's new, easy-to-remember traveler information number. By simply dialing 511, travelers will receive real-time, route-specific road and weather reports plus information on road closures, delays, construction projects and weight and speed restrictions.

The information for this service will come from the National Weather Service, MDT Road and Weather Information Sites, MDT personnel and many other sources. Although there are plans for a new central operations center in Montana, at this time all reports will go to a central computer at the University of North Dakota. There, a meteorologist will be on duty around the clock updating reports at a minimum of every three hours or more often if conditions dictate.

The service will use a voice recognition system so motorists can check road conditions by cell phone en route. After answering three or four questions about their location, travelers will receive a site-specific report on road conditions plus a six-hour weather forecast for the road ahead. Total call time should average under two minutes. Eventually, the system may include tourist information, specialized reports for mountain passes and even the routes and hours of operation for local transit systems.

The Federal Communications Commission designated 511 as the national traveler information telephone number in July of 2000 in the hope that it would eventually replace local road information numbers giving travelers easy-to-remember access to road and weather information wherever they might be. As of July 2002, the service was available in Arizona, Minnesota, Nebraska, Utah, Virginia and in parts of Kentucky, Ohio, and Florida. Although implementation is voluntary, officials expect that by 2005, the majority of states and metropolitan areas will have 511 service.

Reconfiguration Study Progresses

Work is well underway on the Montana Highway Reconfiguration Study commissioned by Governor Judy Martz last summer. Governor Martz requested the study because of statewide interest in widening highways as a way to enhance local economic development. The study process began with selection of an open steering committee consisting of interested representatives from various sectors across the state. A consultant team that included Cambridge Systematics and Economic Development Research Group was hired, and the research phase began.

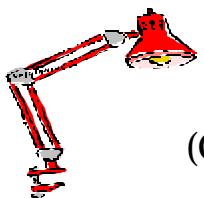
The research portion of the study includes a review of four key topics:

- 1) studies estimating how transportation investments impact economic development and the methods available to measure these impacts;
- 2) how other states incorporate economic development criteria into the planning and project selection process;
- 3) how other states consider highway network reconfiguration and expansion; and
- 4) the role highways and other transportation modes play in the business site location process.

Once the review is complete, the steering committee will meet to review highway network and commodity flow data, including detailed industrial profiles of key Montana industries. Data on Montana industries will be collected via on-site meetings with economic development and business officials through September.

**For additional information on the
Montana Highway Reconfiguration Study go to
[http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/research/reconfigstdy/
overview.html](http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/research/reconfigstdy/overview.html).**

**Questions may be directed to
Sue Sillick at 444-7693
ssillick@state.mt.us
or
Dick Turner at 444-7289
dturner@state.mt.us**



CTEP Project Spotlight

(Community Transportation Enhancement Program)

What is CTEP?

MDT's Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) provides funds to cities, counties and tribal governments of Montana, based upon a population formula. 86.58% of a project's total cost is funded with CTEP funds; the remaining 13.42% is funded by the local agency. Local agencies prioritize and submit project applications for eligibility determination.

For more information on CTEP visit the MDT website at www.mdt.state.mt.us/planning/ctep.

Following is a brief summary of Stillwater County CTEP projects:

Absarokee Sidewalks - This nearly completed project consists of 3,300 linear feet of sidewalks along both sides of Willow Street, from Woodard Street to Montana Avenue, and Montana Avenue from Willow Street to Grove Street, and Church Street from Brook Avenue to Weast Street. The contractor is Diamond D-5 Enterprises of Lewistown. The Absarokee Civic Club, the sponsor of the sidewalk project, provided the local match. The total project cost is \$104,000.

Community Park Landscaping-Fishtail - This project consists of an underground sprinkler system, fencing, a concrete sidewalk and a bicycle rack. Projected total project cost is \$15,000. The Fishtail Community Center will provide the local match. This is the second CTEP project at this site; volunteers provided the labor for both projects.

Park City Sidewalks - This project consists of removal of about 250-feet of deteriorated concrete sidewalk and construction of 3,300 linear feet of new concrete sidewalk. Project cost is \$47,000. The match will be paid through a funding account established for affected property owners and maintained by the Park City Development Council. Construction will begin in 2003.

"A Path Toward Common Sense"

by Mike Baker

Parks & Recreation Director - Kalispell

Just over 10 years ago the city of Kalispell became significantly involved in proposing and developing community wide bike paths and pedestrian walkways. Kalispell strived to develop and create a network of non-motorized trails that would provide a safe link within population centers, commercial areas, schools, parks and green belts.

To date the "common sense" approach is working very effectively. The gaps in our trail system are systematically being filled in phases. Lawrence Park was completed with the pedestrian bridge over the Stillwater River (right). The project consisted of two phases in the city and two phases in the county. The Lawrence Park trail is a multi-functional in that it services schools, residential to commercial and park areas. Woodland Park trail (below) was completed in three phases with a similar outcome.



Future projects include continuation of the Meridian Trail along Highway 93 to the Youth Athletic Complex and eventually a loop to the Lawrence Park Trail. The Lawrence Park trail is a significant network linking the active north and west end of Kalispell to the downtown district. Thomas, Dean and Hoskins Engineering has Phase Two of the Meridian Road designed and scheduled for construction in summer 2003.



The Kalispell City Council has made a commitment to protect and maintain existing trails and to construct new trails as opportunities expand and populations and trail use continue to grow. Trail planning and implementation needs to be coordinated at all levels of government. In Kalispell user groups and managers are working in partnership to develop and implement strategies to promote future trails and expansions.

Note: Kalispell has expanded its trail system with the assistance of \$614,742 in CTEP funding. An additional \$117,528 in CTEP-funded projects are under development.

For more information on CTEP call Thomas Martin at 444-0809 or e-mail tmartin@state.mt.us.



TRANSIT TALES



Billings Bus Depot Completes Phase II Renovation

Greyhound Lines, Inc. (GLI), in cooperation with MDT and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), recently completed the second phase of renovation of the Billings Bus Depot. A&E Architects of Billings designed the project and Fisher Construction of Billings was the general contractor.

The most visible part of the project was the replacement of the 1960's era gravel veneer facade with a material that closely resembles the original facade. The project also included upgrades to the windows (which also replicated the original look), sidewalk replacement, landscaping, concrete replacement in the bus bays and modification of the bus entry/exit doors.

MDT's Transit Section provided approximately \$170,000 of FTA intercity funds to the project and GLI provided \$42,500 in matching funds. Federal law requires that states must direct these FTA funds to projects that support intercity bus providers. Phase III of the Billings depot restoration project, which will focus on mechanical and electrical improvements, is under contract and work is expected to begin in the spring of 2003.

Contact Tom Stuber at 444-9216 or tstuber@state.mt.us for further information.



In an effort to increase public awareness of Montana's transit programs and funding, MDT's Transit Section has developed a decal for vehicles purchased through MDT's Capital Assistance Grant Program. The "Montana Transit.....moving people" decals (above) will soon appear on vehicles in communities across Montana. For further information, please contact Janis Winston at 444-4210 or jwinston@state.mt.us

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Training

TranPlan 21, Montana's statewide multimodal transportation plan, committed MDT to improve staff expertise in the design of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Since 1995, when *TranPlan 21* was adopted, MDT has followed through on this commitment by sponsoring several multi-day training courses for MDT and local government engineers, designers, and planners. Most recently, MDT hosted two Northwestern University's Center for Traffic Safety Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Workshops in Helena on May 29-31 and July 16-19.

Through this training, nearly 70 designers, engineers, and planners from state and local governments expanded their knowledge and understanding of the needs and design criteria necessary to safely accommodate bicycles and pedestrians on Montana's highways and streets. Course evaluations indicate that attendees felt this course was very informative and interesting.

MDT will continue to sponsor these courses to ensure Montana engineers and designers keep up-to-date on current practices.

If you would like additional information or would like to be included on mailing lists for future training opportunities, contact Carol Strizich, MDT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, at cstrizich@state.mt.us or 444-9273.

Capital Assistance and TransADE Workshops

The formal application process for MDT's Fiscal Year 2004 transit grants is in full swing. To begin the annual process, MDT's Transit Section will be conducting application workshops on capital assistance and the new Transportation Assistance for the Disabled and Elderly (TransADE) Program that was created by the 2001 Legislature. Both of these grant programs are available to eligible recipients that provide transportation services to the elderly and persons with disabilities.

The Capital Assistance Program provides funding for vehicles and equipment at a 80/20 funding ratio. The TransADE Program provides operating assistance on a 50/50 funding ratio to agencies serving the elderly and persons with disabilities that coordinate their service with other transit providers in their area. These workshops will provide information on eligibility criteria, timelines, and offer an opportunity to ask questions regarding the process. The workshops will be especially useful to staff involved in developing applications.

The TransADE workshops will be held from 10:00 a.m. - noon at all locations except Helena will be from 3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. and the Capital Assistance workshops will be from 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. except Helena will be from 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.:

Helena: October 1, 2002 (Tuesday)

34th Governor's Conference on Aging
West Coast Colonial Hotel
2301 Colonial Drive

Glendive: October 8, 2002 (Tuesday)

MDT Glendive District Office
Glendive Conference Room
503 North River Avenue

Billings: October 9, 2002 (Wednesday)

MDT Billings District Office
Billings Conference Room
424 Morey Street

Butte: October 22, 2002 (Tuesday)

MDT Butte District Office
Butte Conference Room
3751 Wynne

Great Falls: October 24, 2002 (Thursday)

MDT Great Falls District Office
Great Falls Construction Conference Room
200 Smelter Avenue NE

Applications for the Capital Assistance and TransADE Grant Programs for FY 2004 are due **Monday, February 3, 2003**. Applications will be reviewed by MDT and the multi-agency Selection and Screening Committee by March 15. Results will be distributed by April 30, 2003.

If you have any questions, please contact Patrick Sanders at 444-4265 or psanders@state.mt.us.

STIP Update

MDT has been receiving and reviewing many public comments on the 2003-2005 Draft Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). MDT appreciates all this input.

Currently, MDT is preparing the Draft STIP for the Transportation Commission meeting on September 26, 2002 in Sidney, where it is anticipated the Commission will approve the recommended projects. Once the Transportation Commission approves the Draft STIP it will be forwarded on to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for their concurrent review and final approval.

MDT is expecting to have the 2003-2005 Final STIP available sometime in October of 2002.

If you would like a copy of the 2003-2005 Final STIP and are not currently on our mailing list please call 444-9193, 1-800-714-7296 or e-mail your name and address to gscheibl@state.mt.us.

GPS and Your Roads



in-

The Montana Association of Counties (MACo) and MDT are involved in a collaborative effort to collect GPS (Global Positioning System) coordinates on all roads that are open to public travel in Montana. The purpose of the project is to collect and share the data among city, county and state governments as well as any other entity desiring to use the data. This cooperative project assures there are standard methodologies in the data collection and route identification activities as well as common data collection equipment and software platforms, allowing for seamless data sharing in the future.

Through an agreement with MACo, twelve counties are collecting field GPS data on nearly 70,000 miles of road in all of Montana's cities and counties. The counties provide the data to MDT staff who in turn perform quality control checks. MDT also provides the data repository. Participating counties include Roosevelt, McCone, Custer, Hill, Glacier, Cascade, Fergus, Stillwater, Lewis & Clark, Lake, Missoula, and Beaverhead.

For more information contact Bill Cloud at 444-6114 or bcloud@state.mt.us.



Stage II of the public and stakeholder involvement concluded the last week of August. Like Stage I, a series of stakeholder and open house meetings were held around the state in Glasgow, Billings, Kalispell, Great Falls, and Belgrade. In an effort to reach more Montanans, MDT also used the Montana Educational Telecommunications Network (METNET) video conference facilities to involve five other communities. In addition to

public meetings, MDT also distributed draft policy papers to all of Montana's libraries and invited public input through postcards, press releases, special mailings, and updates to the *TranPlan 21 Update* webpage.

As the result of legislation from Montana's last legislative session, the primary focus of the *2002 TranPlan 21 Update* is to develop ways to improve MDT's efforts to support economic development. Because of this focus, the update process included the involvement of two advisory committees made up of experts in economic development and Montana's transportation needs.

With the assistance of the public and the economic development advisory groups, six draft policy papers have been developed and distributed for public input. The following draft policy papers can be viewed on the MDT internet site during the 45-day comment period after this fall:

Access Management and Land Use Planning
Bicycle and Pedestrian
Economic Development
Public Transportation
Roadway System Performance
Traveler Safety (new policy paper)

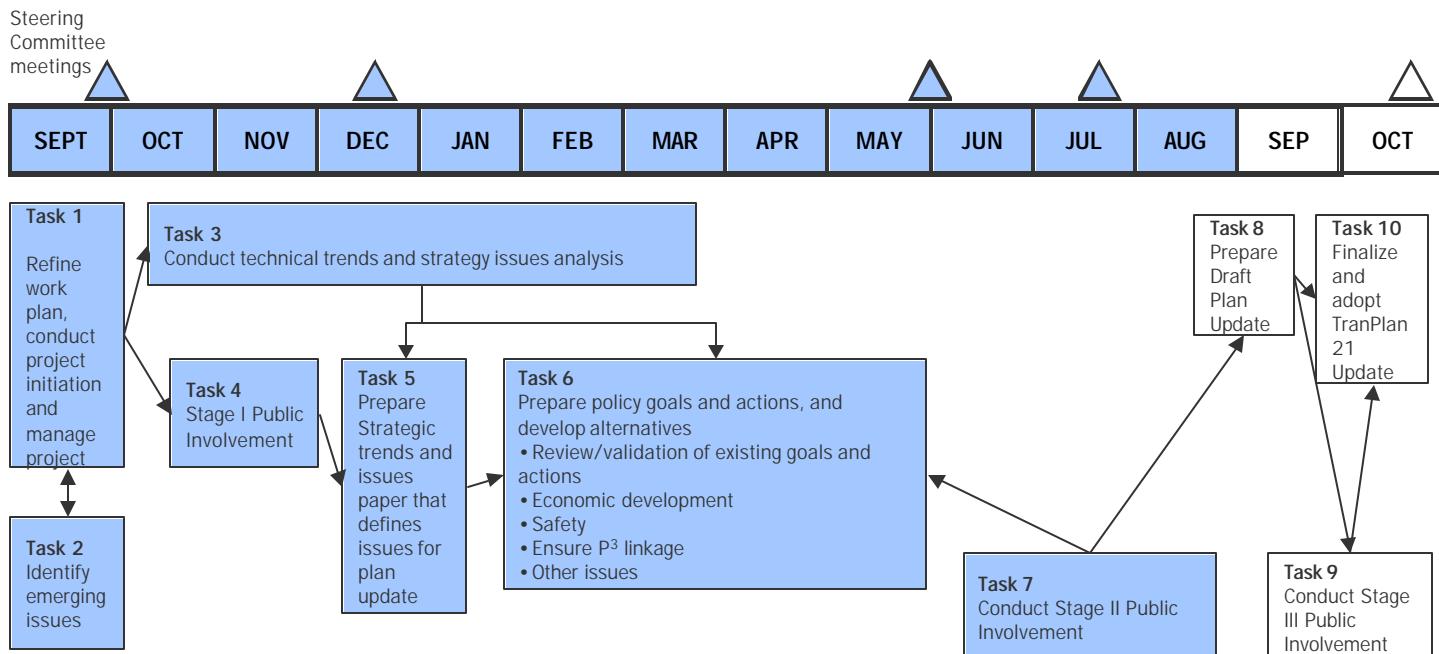


The METNET presentation was broadcast from Helena on June 20 to Missoula, Havre, Miles City, & Butte.



The remaining process will include incorporation of public input and development of a combined draft document that will be distributed for additional public input before the *2002 TranPlan 21 Update* is adopted later this fall.

TranPlan 21 Time Line





You're Invited!

The 4th Annual Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Conference

Mark your calendar and join us in Bozeman at the GranTree Inn on October 2-4.

Visit www.montanalewisandclark.org for more information at .

For questions about registration, exhibiting or sponsorships call

Gail Brockbank at Premier Planning, 406-442-441
or e-mail her at gailb@mt.net
(please include L & C in the subject line)

Sponsored by the
Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission
and
Gallatin Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Association

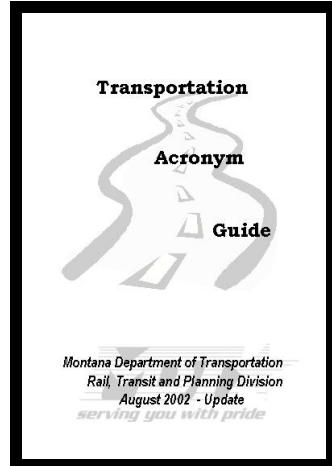
**The next
Transportation
Commission meeting
will be held
Thursday,
September 26th
at the Elk's Lodge
in Sidney.**



Newsline on the NET

In an effort to conserve resources we would like to send you an e-mail notification of the Newsline with a link for internet viewing. The on-line version looks great in color and can be printed from the internet!

Please e-mail
jscott@state.mt.us or phone 444-7307
or 1-800-714-7296 to be included on the list.



Updated Publication Available:

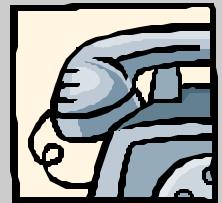
The updated Transportation Acronym Guide (TAG) is now available on the net at www.mdt.state.mt.us/departments/transportation_planning.

For hardcopy contact Joan Scott at 444-7307, 1-800-714-7296 or email jscott@state.mt.us.

Inside this issue:

Sweet Grass Rest Area Open	1
Dial 511	2
CTEP Spotlight	3
Transit Tales	4-5
TranPlan 21 Update	6
Announcements	7

Transportation Planning Division Telephone Numbers



Only the most frequently requested numbers are listed here. For an area or person not listed, call 1-800-714-7296 (in Montana only), or (406) 444-3423. TTY (406) 444-7696 or 1-800-335-7592.

Administrator (Patricia Saindon) 444-0410
Bike/Pedestrian (Carol Strizich) 444-9273
CTEP (Thomas Martin) 444-0809
Map Orders (James Colegrove) 444-6119
Multimodal Planning (Dick Turner) 444-7289
Projects (Jeff Ebert) 444-7639
Secondary Roads (Gary Larson) 444-6110
Road Data & Mapping (Ed Eretz) 444-6111
Traffic Data (Dan Bisom) 444-6122
Transit (Janis Winston) 444-4210
Urban Planning (Zia Kazimi) 444-3445
ITS Planning (Ross Tervo) 444-9248
Newsline Editor (Joan Scott) 444-7307

6400 copies of this public document were published at an estimated cost of 45¢ per copy for a total of \$2,884.97 which includes \$ 990.57 for printing and \$1,894.40 for distribution. Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided upon request. TTY number is (406) 444-7696 or 1-800-335-7592.

MDT's Mission

To serve the public by providing a transportation system and services that emphasize quality, safety, cost effectiveness, economic vitality and sensitivity to the environment.

**Montana Department of Transportation
Transportation Planning Division
2701 Prospect Avenue
P.O. Box 201001
Helena, Montana 59620-1001
1-800-714-7296**

Pre Sort Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Helena, MT
Permit No. 141



Federal Hazard Elimination Program

What Is The Hazard Elimination Program?

The Hazard Elimination Program is a federally funded program designed to address high hazard accident locations. Some examples of types of projects addressed with these funds are signing, delineation, guardrail installation, slope flattening, channelization, or roadway realignment.

Who Is It Managed By?

MDT's Safety Management Section is responsible for conducting an annual review of investigated traffic accidents of record in order to develop a priority list of locations that could participate in the Federal Hazard Elimination Program.

Where Does The Money Come From?

The funding for corrective actions at these locations is 90% Federal participation and 10% state and/or local participation.

Who Is Eligible?

To be eligible, the city/county must be a regular participant in reporting accidents to the Montana Highway Patrol into the Highway Information System (HIS), and the proposed improvement must not be a maintenance function.

What Are The Goals Of The Hazard Elimination Program?

The goals of the Safety Management System and Hazard Elimination Safety Program are to reduce the number and severity of crashes on Montana roadways.

How Are High Hazard Locations Identified?

High hazard locations are identified by accident trends based on number of crashes, accident rates, severity of crashes, or a combination of these factors.

How Many Locations From Each City/County Can Be Submitted?

Up to five locations may be submitted; these sites will be included in the overall statewide ranking and priority listing.

What Information Needs To Be Submitted With The Application?

Safety priority list, accident analysis, traffic information and proposed improvements (See application on the back of this page).

What Is The Review And Approval Process?

After all applications from all participating cities/counties are received, a prioritized listing by benefit/cost ratio is developed. A program for improvement will be developed, subject to the availability of funds and positive benefit/cost ratio from this listing. At that time, a copy of the listing will be distributed to participants.

Who Is The Application Submitted To?

Montana Department of Transportation
Safety Management Section
2701 Prospect Ave.
Helena, MT 59620-1001
(406) 444-6113

When Is The Deadline For Submitting Applications?

March 31, 2003



Application For Federal Hazard Elimination Program

Each City/County should submit one application per intersection or high hazard location (up to five) to be considered for funding with a copy of their safety jurisdiction-wide priority list.

Send to: **Montana Department of Transportation
Safety Management Section
2701 Prospect Ave
Helena, MT 59620-1001**

1. City/County of Area _____

2. Location Description of Intersection or Hazard Area

3. Collision Diagram of Investigated Accidents

- A. Type - Pedestrian, Angle, Rear-end, Other, Etc.
- B. Severity - Fatal, Injury, Or Property Damage



4. Time Period the Data is For:

From Date _____ To Date _____

5. Traffic

- A. Average Daily Traffic Entering from Each Leg of an Intersection
- B. Average Daily Traffic (High Hazard Location)
- C. Percent Traffic is Projected to Increase or Decrease in Next Few Years and a Short Explanation of this Increase or Decrease

. Accident Trend and Countermeasures

- A. Identified Accident Trends
- B. Corrective Measures Proposed to Address the Accident Trends

. Proposed Improvements

- A. Improvement to be Considered and a Sketch of the Improvement
- B. Detailed Estimate of Cost for the Improvement

**** Please attach diagram and analysis to application *****